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ABSTRACT

The trend in public child welfare toward increased purchase of services from local agencies is presented in this report as a rationale for developing monitoring systems which link service to client outcomes and to agency mandates. The monitoring system designed for the Parent Training Initiative, a parent education program, is described as one system which assesses critical service areas, links parts of the decision making system, identifies points of interventions, provides for decision rules to improve effectiveness, and focuses on client outcomes related to agency mandates. Use of the parent monitoring system to assess contractor performance, parenting knowledge, parent satisfaction, parenting skills acquired through the program, and status change is explained; monitoring and assessment instruments developed specifically to assess these areas are described. The use of a movement table to track the progress of cases is explained and the roles of the caseworker, parent, and educator are outlined. The monitoring report, which converts raw data from the evaluation into usable information, is described. Results of pilot testings of the monitoring system are given along with suggestions for future developments in the areas of implementation, information system support, and curriculum refinement. Examples of completed evaluation and referral forms are included. (NRB)

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DESIGN AND PILOT TESTING OF A PARENT EDUCATION MONITORING SYSTEM*

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DESIGN AND PILOT TESTING

OF A

PARENT EDUCATION MONITORING SYSTEM*

by

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for

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

June 30, 1982

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PARENT TRAINING MONITORING SYSTEM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is a tremendous amount of parent education being conducted across the country. Models of curriculum and service delivery vary widely in content and service design. Unfortunately, existing models of parent education are most frequently designed to serve the more highly educated, verbal and motivated parent. Parent education is an important service for public child welfare agencies to provide, yet these parents tend to be less verbal, motivated and educated than those served by other systems. Public child welfare agencies have a stake in the design of a parent education service that meets the needs of parents and that is linked to the public child welfare mandates of providing permanent and safe homes.

The second year of the Parent Training Initiative has made great strides in meeting this service design need. At the conclusion of the year there is:

- a standard parent education curriculum;
- a manual for parent educators;
- a parent education service monitoring system.

The definition of a parent education curriculum and a specific target population for service were two extremely important unresolved issues at the end of the first year; they were quickly decided this year. Based on first year experience, it was decided to define the target population as those DCFS open cases where the child who was the source of referral was 12 years of age or younger and where parent education was likely to prevent placement or assist in reuniting the family.

The curriculum is now specified to the point that there exists a detailed description of what an educator is to do in each of eight sessions organized around four modules or topics. The topics and number of sessions were based on the consensus of those involved in the first year of the parent education initiative. The sessions' design, exercises and materials were the result of a collaborative effort between this group, and Don Yohe and Jane Schafer of Sangamon State University. A manual for parent educators has also been prepared which includes resource material on principles of adult learning, child development, and conducting parent education sessions. The result of these efforts is a standardization of service so that what is delivered as parent education under the initiative is the same across sites and provided to a more homogenous group of participants.

The parent education monitoring system is based on a model that, when implemented, links clients served to agency mandates. The monitoring system includes assessment of:

- parenting knowledge at the conclusion of service
- parenting knowledge gained through the service
- parents' satisfaction with the service
- parenting skills acquired
- the movement of children into and out of placement.

This information is brought together in a two-page site monitoring report which provides for decision rules to facilitate intervention wherever there is substandard performance or discrepancies between indicators.

Pilot testing of the system has shown that it does distinguish between sites, identifies points of intervention, and provides for continuous monitoring to facilitate service refinement. As a result of this year's efforts it is suggested that:

- the monitoring system be implemented;
- the Department information system be developed in regard to the movement table to support the monitoring system;
- the curriculum be further revised in light of parents' feedback.

PARENT TRAINING MONITORING SYSTEM

Rationale and Approach

One trend in public child welfare has been increased purchase of service from local agencies, such as family service agencies or mental health providers. Traditionally, monitoring of these contracts has been limited to fiscal accountability and the product produced (units of service). The dominant model has been: a service is argued for on value grounds or because it was shown to be effective through a demonstration project; the service is contracted for from a local provider; and the number of clients served and dollars spent are accounted for.

Critical assumptions in this model are: First, each service provider will perform the same behavior under the same label. That is, all counselors do the same thing, all parent educators teach the same content in the same way, or all caseworkers will perform that behavior shown to be effective through the demonstration project. A second assumption is that outcomes of service are separate from, and have no relation to other parts of the decision making system. For example, it is assumed that parents who learn new skills will automatically have their children returned from placement. Third, once a service is designed and delivered, nothing changes so there is no need for intervention, refinement, or redesign.

Increasingly, these assumptions are being recognized and viewed as simplistic. Consequently, there is interest in developing monitoring systems which link service to client outcomes and to agency mandates. The monitoring system developed for the Parent Training Initiative is an example of a system which assesses critical service areas, links parts of the decision making system, identifies points of interventions,

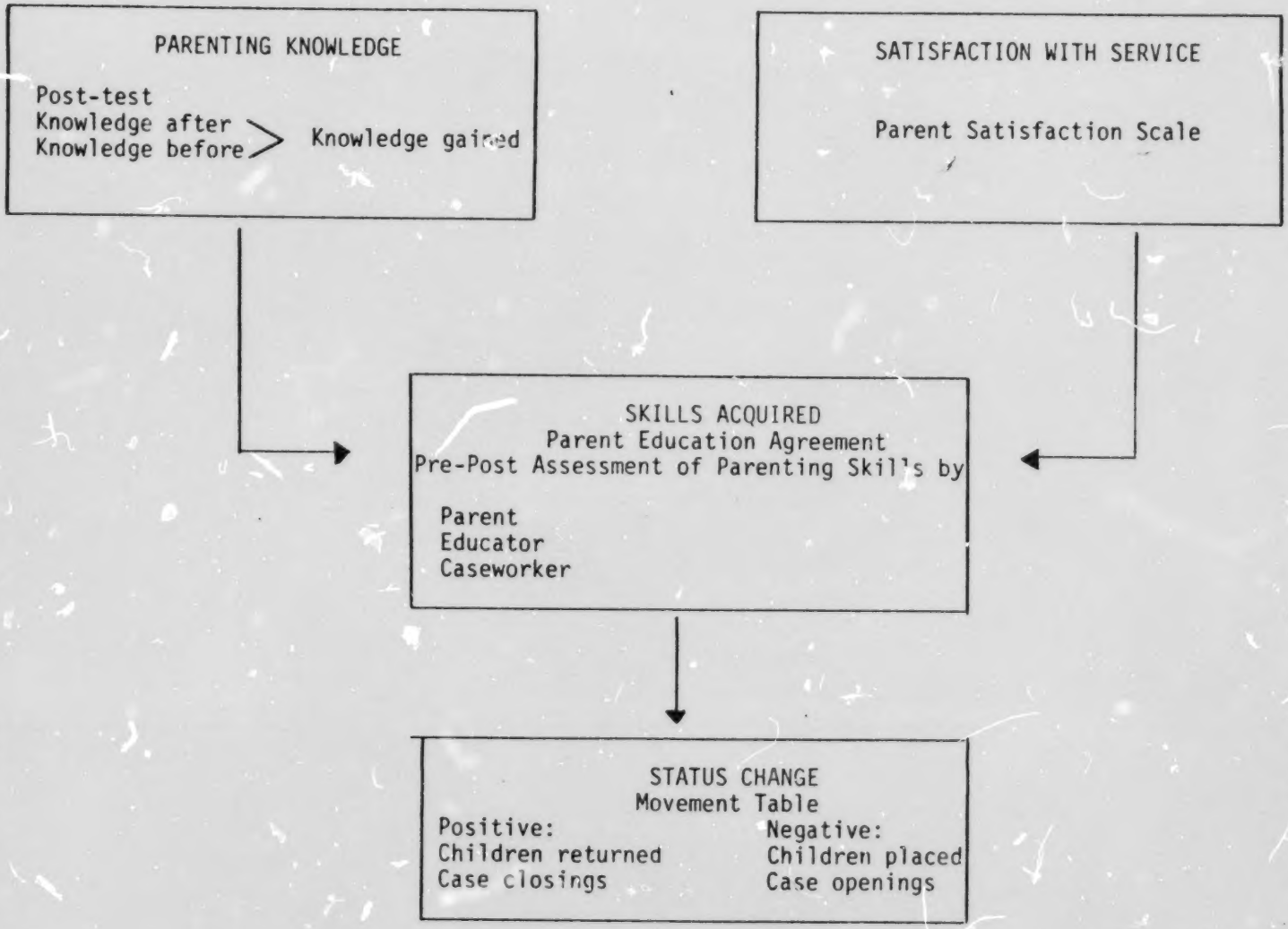
provides for decision rules to improve effectiveness, and focuses on client outcomes related to agency mandates.

The parent education monitoring system is depicted in Figure 1. Client (parent) change begins with obtaining cognitive knowledge in an atmosphere of respect, empathy and support so that the knowledge is translated into behavior and reflected in new or improved skills. These skills then allow children to be returned home or cases to be closed.

The monitoring system judges contractor performance by measuring each of these areas, compiling the data, and comparing it to previously agreed upon standards. Data only become information when they change behavior. The mechanism to translate data to change in contractor behavior, and consequently improved performance, is the decision rule. Decision rules are mutually agreed upon if-then statements. If performance for any particular area falls below standard, then certain positive actions to improve performance are to be taken. Pilot testing of the system has shown that it accurately reflects contractor performance.

Parenting knowledge is assessed through a post-test which has two parts. One part is a set of parenting knowledge items keyed directly to the curriculum. For each curriculum objective there are two content questions. These questions assess the knowledge parents have at the conclusion of the service. The second feature is retrospective reporting where, for each objective, parents are asked if they knew the concept prior to participating in the parenting classes. This retrospective feature has shown to be as effective for assessing knowledge gained as a pre-post test model while avoiding post-test contamination by a pre-test. In the pilot test of this system, the

Figure 1. Parent Education Monitoring System



retrospective feature worked very well to assess knowledge gained and to identify areas of strength and weakness in the curriculum.

Parent satisfaction is assessed through a sixteen item scale developed specifically for this project. Originally 100 items keyed to the ideas of educators demonstrating such characteristics as empathy, acceptance, and support were written. Preliminary screening reduced the number of items to 50. Field testing and statistical analysis further reduced the number of items to 32. The pilot test of the system employed the 32 item scale. Analysis of this data allowed further reduction to the current 16 items which reflect a one dimensional scale of parent satisfaction. This scale can be completed quickly and easily by parents.

Parenting skills acquired through the program are assessed through a pre and post assessment in which parents, educator and caseworkers participate. At the initiation of service, parents, educators, and caseworkers, select those skills that the parent will work to acquire through the parent education service. This pre-assessment is conducted collaboratively using the parent education agreement which lists those skills taught through the program. At the completion of service the parent and educator assess whether or not each skill has been acquired.

The "bottom line" for public child welfare agencies is providing children who enter the system safe, permanent homes. Any child welfare service needs to be explicitly linked to this mandate. Consequently, the last area of assessment is status change. Quite simply, services should result in children returning home and cases being closed. This status change feature of the system is assessed through the movement table. The movement table is an internal Department mechanism which tracks movement of children into and out of placement and the system.

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The numbers of positive moves is compared to the number of negative for a measure of status change.

The monitoring report, performance standards, and decision rules are critical system mechanisms for compiling this information and providing feedback to improve contractor performance. The data collected through the indicated assessments could be analyzed and presented in a variety of ways. However, too much data obscures rather than enlightens. With too much data one never knows what is important and someone can always find something they are doing well. Consequently, the monitoring report was carefully designed to be no more than two pages and provide for translating relevant data into information.

The report contains a section for each of the areas of the monitoring system plus a brief record of contractor productivity in terms of numbers of parents served and numbers of dropouts. Each section of the report provides for performance standards. An individual score or average is meaningless unless it is compared to a previously agreed upon standard.

The decision rule is the primary mechanism to translate data into information. Prior to initiation of service the contractor and the Department monitor collaboratively establish decision rules which provide for positive actions if performance in any particular area falls below the agreed upon standards. For example: If more than 10 percent of the parents drop out of the program, the monitor will interview each dropout using the parent satisfaction scale and share the results for each of the 16 items with the educator. In this way, the educator can change relevant classroom behavior to reduce the dropout

Any system to monitor service effectiveness requires resources to initiate and maintain it. The more extensive the system, the more sensitive it is to change, and the more resources required. At the extreme, it might be argued that individual assessment over an extended period of time is the only way to "really know" if a person has changed. This may or may not be an ideal, but surely one no public child welfare agency can afford. This model is an alternative involving multiple assessment of critical components of the service which links these components and provides for the service system to learn from its own performance. Since this type of service monitoring is new and there are not large resources available for this function, this model was developed to be effective yet economical.

Monitoring and Assessment Instruments

Each of the parts of the monitoring system requires measurement or assessment. Devices for each of these have been developed specifically for this service. In addition, a referral form has been designed which provides important information to educators about the parents they are to serve.

Description of Family Referral Form

The need for parent education is based on assessment of parents by caseworkers. The parent education curriculum was developed to teach parenting skills in four areas: communicating better, building self-esteem, handling stress and anger, and managing child's behavior. If, in the judgment of a caseworker, a parent needs skill development in any of these areas, the child who is the source of referral is less than 12 years of age, the family is a DCFS open case, and parent education would assist returning a child from placement or prevent placement, then

referral for parent education is appropriate. To provide the parent educator with basic information, the Family Referral Form is completed by the caseworker.

Since the program is designed for DCFS open cases where the child who is the source of referral is at home and 12 years of age or younger, this is all important information. In addition, information on other children in the family, at home or in placement, will assist educators to tailor the program to meet the needs of individual parents. It is important for monitoring purposes to keep track of children moving into and out of placement. To accomplish this, it is important that the complete name of the child be included on the form particularly when it is different from the parent's. The DCFS case identification number also helps in this monitoring function. The five questions which ask caseworkers to rate parents provide information on the parent's ability to function and profit from a group learning experience. The parent's motivation, ability to perform simple tasks, verbal ability and ability to control anger are all related to the appropriateness of a group learning experience. Parents need only minimal skills in these areas to succeed with this program. The Family Referral Form is to be completed by the DCFS caseworker and forwarded to the educator with the parent education agreement when a referral is made.

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PARENT TRAINING INITIATIVE

Family Referral Form

Parent(s): _____ DATE: _____

Directions to home:

Address: _____

_____

Phone: _____

If last name of child is different from parents, please include both names.

DCFS Case ID# _____

List all children: _____ Age: _____

Star (*) if in the home _____ Age: _____

_____ Age: _____

_____ Age: _____

_____ Age: _____

Other adults living in the home: _____ Relationship: _____

_____ Relationship: _____

_____ Relationship: _____

Is this an open DCFS Case?

1 - NO, explain: _____

2 - YES

Is this case classified as? _____

1 - Abuse

2 - Neglect

3 - Family Stress

4 - Child Behavior Problem

5 - Other _____

Was the training court-ordered?

1 - NO

2 - YES

What is the age of the child who is the source of referral? _____

What is the harm this child is experiencing or likely to encounter? _____

_____

Which parents are to participate in training?

1 - Mother

2 - Father

3 - Other, state relationship _____

When is participant available for classes (times) ___ _____

_____

What is the goal for this case at the completion of training? _____

1. Remain home
2. Return home
3. Adoption
4. Permanent Family Placement/Relative
5. Permanent Family Placement/Foster Home
6. Independence
7. Long term care - Residential

The parent will need:

1. Transportation
2. Child care

Please rate the parent in the following areas.

	Circle one			
Stated interest and motivation of parent to attend parenting classes.	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
The parent's ability to understand and carry out simple tasks.	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
The parent's verbal ability. (Could they understand and participate in the group discussion?)	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
The parent's ability to control anger. (in relationship to parent trainer and other group members)	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
The parent's reading ability.	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor

Is there any reason a group mode of instruction would NOT be appropriate?

1 - NO

2 - YES (What would that be?) _____

What special characteristics or considerations relate to this family (i.e. physical or mental handicap, mental retardation, known family violence, etc). Specify the family member that these considerations relate to: _____

Source of Referral

_____

Name

_____

Description of Parent Education Agreement .

The parent education agreement is an important aspect of the parent education service making explicit the skills to be learned and the responsibilities of those involved. This agreement is also part of the service monitoring system and is used as a measure of skills acquired at the completion of service.

Which skills are to be obtained is a decision which must be made jointly by parent, educator and caseworker. Each person has their own perspective which is valuable and must be respected if the service is to have desirable effects.

The parent education agreement involves:

1. Selection of a set of skills which the parent will acquire.
2. Specification of parent responsibilities.
3. Specification of caseworker responsibilities.
4. Agreement by parent, worker and educator as indicated by their signatures.

The skills listed on the agreement are those targeted by the parent education curriculum. They are grouped in four areas, as is the curriculum, and they are stated as behaviorally as possible. There is probably a optimum number of skills to be learned in eight weeks. While this number is not known, listing all 12 skills is inappropriate.

Ideally the parent, the educator and the worker would meet together to complete the agreement. When this is not possible, the worker will complete the referral form and their part of the agreement, sign it, and send it to the parent educator. In general, agreement between all three parties will come easily. In cases of differences of opinion, discussion

and a spirit of negotiation will resolve the differences. In the rare event that agreement cannot be reached, the DCFS caseworker should involve her supervisor as mediator.

Role of Caseworker. With the parent education agreement, workers select those skills they think the parent needs based on assessment of the parents and their situation. Caseworkers may wish to leave the section on responsibilities of the parent for the parent educator to complete, or they may wish to indicate those responsibilities they think are most important. Caseworkers may add responsibilities specific to the situation, such as a parent being sober at each class or encouraging a spouse to attend.

In Part III, caseworkers will indicate the number of contacts they will have with the parent and the educator during the service period. It is important to remember that the service is only 8 weeks in duration so only a few contacts will be possible. These visits are an important source for assessment of the effectiveness of the parent education service. Caseworkers should look for the effects of the service reflected in parenting behavior. If the worker cannot meet with the parent and educator to complete their part of the agreement, the worker should sign the form and send it to the parent educator. The form will be returned to the worker after the parent and educator have completed it. The caseworker will also use the agreement as one means of evaluating the service.

Roles of Parent and Educator. If all three parties cannot meet to complete the form it is critical that the parent and the educator complete their segments together. The parent and educator should select the skills to be acquired through the service. At this point all three parties will have selected parenting skills. Those areas of agreement then represent the minimal list of skills the parent will acquire. The educator will

target these areas with the parent in the context of the eight sessions where other skills will also be taught. The educator should make clear to the parent their expectations by completing the responsibilities of the parent section with the parent.

When the form has been signed by all three parties, the educator should place a copy in her file, provide the parent a copy, and send the original to the caseworker. The parent and educator will also be involved in using the agreement as one part of the evaluation process.

PARENT EDUCATION AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

Parent	Parent Educator	Referral Source (worker)
Address:	Address:	Address:
Phone:	Phone:	Phone:

I. SKILLS PARENT WILL ACQUIRE THROUGH PARENT EDUCATION.

Circle the letter of the skills to be acquired.

Parent	Teacher	Case-worker		(For evaluation) Was skill acquired? P	T	C
(P)	(T)	(C)	1. Communicating Better			
A	A	A	A. Listening carefully to your child.	Y	Y	Y
B	B	B	B. Talking about you and your child's feelings.		Y	Y
C	C	C	C. Talking with your child in a way that helps.	Y	Y	Y
			II. Building Self-Esteem			
D	D	D	D. Saying nice things about yourself.	Y	Y	Y
E	E	E	E. Saying nice things about your kids.	Y	Y	Y
F	F	F	F. Doing something that is fun and good for you.	Y	Y	Y
G	G	G	G. Doing something with your child that is fun for both of you.	Y	Y	Y
			III. Handling Stress and Anger			
H	H	H	H. Doing something positive when you feel overwhelmed.	Y	Y	Y
I	I	I	I. Doing something positive when you are angry.	Y	Y	Y
			IV. Managing Your Child's Behavior			
J	J	J	J. Reacting differently and constructively to a specific behavior of your child.	Y	Y	Y
K	K	K	K. Deciding how to change a behavior.	Y	Y	Y
L	L	L	L. Changing a behavior of your child's.	Y	Y	Y

Parent and teacher will work on the following objectives: _____

_____ _____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____ _____

(Fill in blanks with areas of agreement from objectives.)

II. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENT

Circle those appropriate and fill in the necessary blanks.

A. Parent will attend all sessions.

B. Parent will contact _____ before a session if they cannot attend.
(name of educator)

C. Parent will be home for scheduled home visits.

D. Parent will complete homework assignments.

E. _____

F. _____

G. _____

III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF REFERRAL SOURCE (WORKER)

The caseworker will monitor the progress of the service through:

A. _____ contacts with parent.
(number or frequency)

B. _____ contacts with parent educator.
(number or frequency)

IV. CASEWORKERS OBSERVATION AT COMPLETION OF SERVICE

(Circle 1 or 2 as appropriate)

At the conclusion of this service:

1 - This parent is better able to care for their children at home and this case can be closed.

2 - This parent is now able to care for their children at home and they can be returned from placement.

_____ Parent Signature

_____ Parent Educator

_____ Referral Source Signature

Use of Parent Education Agreement for Evaluation

The Parent Education Agreement is also used to assess the parenting skills acquired. At the beginning of service, each party (parent, educator, caseworker) participated in determining the skills to be the focus for the service and received a copy of the completed agreement. For evaluation purposes each party to the agreement assesses whether or not the agreed upon skills were acquired.

Parent/Educator. Assessment of skills acquired can be done by the parent and teacher separately or jointly. If the assessment is done jointly this will provide an opportunity for structuring part of the last home visit and finding out how well the service met the needs of the client. Using a copy of the original agreement, brought by the teacher, both parties will go over the skills agreed upon, circling "Y" (Yes) if the skill was acquired.

If the assessment is done separately, the parent should bring their copy of the agreement to the last class session. At the end of the session each parent circles "Y" (Yes) under "Was skill acquired?" for those skills agreed upon as an area of focus. The agreement is then given to the educator with the parent satisfaction survey and the knowledge gained scale. The teacher completes the same assessment. The completed agreement is then sent to the contract monitor with the parent satisfaction scale and the completed knowledge gained scale.

Caseworker. At the completion of the parent education service, the caseworker's evaluation of the skills the parent acquired must be done through a careful assessment process. The caseworker needs to spend sufficient time with the parent observing their behavior so that the

caseworker can say if the parent exhibits the skill. Each of the skills indicated on the agreement is a behavior and those which were to be the target of service should be exhibited behaviorally before a caseworker says the skill was acquired. This means that a simple interview is not sufficient for assessment purposes. The caseworker should schedule enough time with the parent in the presence of children that a behavioral assessment can be made.

The last section of the agreement relates to the service as it assists organizational goal attainment. Public child welfare services are to provide parents the necessary skills, benefits, and supports so that the family can be reunited or the family maintained and the case closed. To connect the service to these goals, workers should complete section IV of the agreement at completion of the parent education.

Caseworkers are encouraged to assess other areas of the service. Workers may wish to use the blank section of page two of the agreement to comment on the following:

- The overall value of the service to the parent.
- The interaction between the parent educator and the caseworker.
- Whether or not the educator encouraged the parent to attend sessions.
- Other evaluative comments on the service.

When the caseworker has completed the evaluation, a copy of the form should be forwarded to the parent education contract monitor. The original agreement should be kept in the case file.

Description of Parent Satisfaction Scale

Assessing parent satisfaction is an indirect but effective method for determining the degree to which service providers demonstrate empathy, make reasonable accomodations for parents, and have reasonable expectation of parents. All of these are important for assisting client change. This service monitoring model assumes that knowledge without satisfaction will not be translated into parenting skills. The more satisfied parents are with the service, the more likely they are to demonstrate change.

This instrument should be completed by those dropping out of the program as well as those attending the entire eight weeks. For those who drop out, the questionnaire should be mailed to the parent along with an envelope stamped and addressed to the DCFS contract monitor. For parents completing the program, the instrument is to be completed at the last session and returned to the educator; the educator will include it as part of a report package sent to the contract monitor. While returning the questionnaire to the educator might encourage the parents to rate the educator more highly, most educators take precautions to prevent this. One such precaution could be asking one parent to hand out and collect all the questionnaires and return them to the educator in an envelope.

Each item is scored on a four point scale (rarely or a little of the time = 1, some of the time = 2, a good part of the time = 3, most or all the time = 4). The individual scores on the 16 items can be added to yield an overall satisfaction score. In addition, the results of each item can be examined for each site to identify specific differences between teachers, classes and sites.

Parent Satisfaction Questionnaire

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Is this a DCFS Open Case
Yes No

The Department of Children and Family Services is working to improve services to parents. In order for us to know if this program is meeting parents needs, we need you to answer the following questions. The statements are designed to measure your satisfaction with the parent education service. Please answer each item as carefully and accurately as you can by circling a response.

	Circle your answer			
1. I now have a better idea of what to expect from my child or children.	Rarely or a little of the time	Some of the time	A good part of the time	Most or all the time
2. I can talk with my children more easily.	Rarely or a little of the time	Some of the time	A good part of the time	Most or all the time
3. Because of this class I feel that I have more control over things.	Rarely or a little of the time	Some of the time	A good part of the time	Most or all the time
4. I thought the teacher liked my ideas.	Rarely or a little of the time	Some of the time	A good part of the time	Most or all the time of
5. The teacher told me when I did something well.	Rarely or a little of the time	Some of the time	A good part of the time	Most or all the time
6. I can manage my child's behavior better.	Rarely or a little of the time	Some of the time	A good part of the time	Most or all the time
7. I knew what each class was for.	Rarely or a little of the time	Some of the time	A good part of the time	Most or all the time
8. The teacher helped me to talk about things important to me.	Rarely or a little of the time	Some of the time	A good part of the time	Most or all the time
9. The teacher helped me understand what I was thinking or trying to say.	Rarely or a little of the time	Some of the time	A good part of the time	Most or all the time
10. The teacher made learning easy.	Rarely or a little of the time	Some of the time	A good part of the time	Most or all the time
11. The teacher helped me to change.	Rarely or a little of the time	Some of the time	A good part of the time	Most or all the time
12. I had a chance to talk in class.	Rarely or a little of the time	Some of the time	A good part of the time	Most or all the time
13. The teacher helped me work on my problems.	Rarely or a little of the time	Some of the time	A good part of the time	Most or all the time
14. The teacher helped me see what I was trying to change.	Rarely or a little of the time	Some of the time	A good part of the time	Most or all the time
15. The teacher encouraged me to decide for myself.	Rarely or a little of the time	Some of the time	A good part of the time	Most or all the time
16. I think I know more about children now.	Rarely or a little of the time	Some of the time	A good part of the time	Most or all the time

Description of Parenting Knowledge Test

Since the parent education program is an educational service, assessment of the knowledge which parents possess at the completion of service as well as that gained from the program is the next area of evaluation. The test provided has been developed using the stated objectives and curriculum of each unit. Each objective is tested with two questions. The total number correct (34 possible) represents the knowledge the parent has at the completion of the service.

To assess knowledge gained, an innovative retrospective reporting technique has been employed. Since the service is only eight weeks in duration, pre-tests would tend to contaminate post-test results. It has been shown that the retrospective technique can be as accurate as the pre-post method and avoids the contamination problem. For each objective the parent is asked if they knew the content before participating in the education service. The parent is credited with gaining knowledge in a paricular area if they respond "no" to the retrospective question and answer both of the related content questions correctly.

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PARENT TRAINING PROGRAM
FINAL EXAM

The Department of Children and Family Services is working to improve and expand services to parents. In order for us to know if this program is meeting parent needs we need some information. Since you have gone through the parent program, the information you can give us would be of great value. Your answers to the following questions could help us improve our services to parents.

If you have any problems answering any of the questions please ask for help. It is important that you answer all questions.

For each question circle one answer only.

COMMUNICATION

1. Sometimes we let a child know how we feel about them without speaking a word.
   a. True
   b. False

2. If you screamed angrily, "Of course I love you!", you would probably:
   a. Be clear about what you meant
   b. Help the child understand you
   c. Give a confusing message
   d. Get your idea across

3. Before you took these classes, did you know that you give messages without using words?
   a. Yes
   b. No

4. When you are trying to listen, stop talking. You can't listen when you're talking.
   a. True
   b. False

5. When you want to really listen to your child, which of the following are good to do?
   a. Keep on doing whatever it is you are doing.
   b. Tell your child they must learn to handle their own problems.
   c. Immediately tell your child what to do.
   d. Stop what you are doing and look at your child.

6. Before you took these classes, did you know how to practice good listening?
   a. Yes
   b. No

7. Listening to a child is like trying to see the world through the child's eyes.
   a. True
   b. False

8. Your daughter got a good grade on her report card. She gives it to you and says, "Hey, look at this!" She is feeling:
   a. angry
   b. happy
   c. guilty
   d. frustrated

9. Before you took these classes, did you know how to listen for what your child was feeling?
   a. Yes
   b. No

10. Which one of the following statements would sound blaming to a child?
    a. "You are lazy!"
    b. "I don't like messy rooms."
    c. "It's time to clean your room."
    d. "I like help when I clean."

11. Which of the following tells the child how the parent feels?
    a. "You hurt him!"
    b. "I am worried that you will hurt him."
    c. "Stop it!"
    d. "You are bad when you hit."

12. Before you took these classes, did you know the difference between statements that tell a child how you feel and statements that blame the child?
    a. Yes

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SELF-ESTEEM

13. Praising children has no effect on how they feel about themselves.
    a. True
    b. False

14. Knowing good things about yourself should make you feel:
    a. good about yourself
    b. bored
    c. unhappy
    d. bad about yourself

15. Before you took these classes, did you understand that knowing good things about yourself affects how much you like yourself?
    a. Yes
    b. No

16. It is of no help to children to say good things about what they do well. It spoils them.
    a. True
    b. False

17. Which of the following makes a child feel good without saying a word?
    a. Pointing out the next job to be done.
    b. Smiling and patting on the back.
    c. Ignoring something the child did well.
    d. Giving the child a job that is too hard for him/her.

18. Before you took these classes, did you know that people like themselves better when the things they do well are pointed out?
    a. Yes
    b. No

19. When doing things with your child it is important to point out everything they do wrong. How else will they learn?
    a. True
    b. False

20. Father and daughter are doing dishes. Which of the following statements would help each of them feel good?
    a. Father says, "Be sure to get all the dishes dry."
    b. Father says, "I can't wait to get done!"
    c. Father says, "It's fun doing dishes with you!"
    d. Father says, "Quit being so sloppy."

21. Before you took these classes, did you know that having a good time with someone is one way that helps you feel good about yourself?
    a. Yes
    b. No

22. When planning an activity for children, keep in mind what they like to do and what they are able to do.
    a. True
    b. False

23. Your six-year old wants to learn to roller skate. To help him feel good about himself you would:
    a. Drop him off at the skating rink alone.
    b. Help him learn to skate in your driveway first.
    c. Send him to the skating rink on the busiest night.
    d. Tell him to ask someone else for help.

24. Before you took these classes, did you know how to plan an activity with your child which made you both feel good?
    a. Yes
    b. No

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MANAGING ANGRY FEELINGS

25. When you feel very angry, it is important to think about what you should do. If not, you might overreact.
    a. True
    b. False

26. Which one of the following describes a parent overreacting?
    a. A child spills milk. The parent sends the child to his/her room for 2 hours.
    b. A child throws a temper tantrum. The parent sits the child on a chair until he/she stops screaming.
    c. A child tracks mud into the house. The parent tells the child to clean up the mess.
    d. A child refuses to share a toy. The parent puts the toy away for 10 minutes.

27. Before you took these classes, did you know that your feelings can sometimes lead you to overreact?
    a. Yes
    b. No

28. It is not important to know what makes you tense, since you can't do anything about it anyway.
    a. True
    b. False

29. Which one of the following is not under your control?
    a. Baby is wet and crying.
    b. The house is a mess.
    c. A loved one dies.
    d. Your child refuses to go to bed.

30. Before you took these classes, did you know that some things that stress us can be changed, and some cannot?
    a. Yes
    b. No

31. When you are angry at your child, it is helpful to step back until you "cool down".
    a. True
    b. False

32. Screaming at a child when you are angry may cause:
    a. A child to stop the behavior forever
    b. A child to feel secure
    c. A child to feel angry and resentful
    d. A child to respect you

33. Before you took these classes, did you know some good ways to express anger?
    a. Yes
    b. No

34. Problem solving is a way to cope with some stress.
    a. True
    b. False

35. Which of the following is not a helpful way to relax?
    a. Stretching exercises
    b. Counting to ten
    c. Deep "belly breathing"
    d. Drinking, or taking drugs

36. Before you took these classes, did you know some good ways to relieve stress?
    a. Yes
    b. No

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BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

37. There are different styles of parenting. It is not important for you to know what style you use.
    a. True
    b. False

38. At six years of age, Johnny has no set bedtime, no chores around the house, and if he feels like staying home from school, his parents let him. Johnny's parents probably:
    a. Have so many rules that Johnny can't remember them all
    b. Let Johnny do pretty much as he pleases
    c. Give Johnny some rules but will make exceptions
    d. Are very strict and demand that he obey them

39. Before you took these classes, did you know there are different styles of parenting?
    a. Yes
    b. No

40. You can get a child to cooperate more easily if you use punishment rather than rewards.
    a. True
    b. False

41. Which of the following influences how a child behaves?
    a. How the parents act
    b. Rules that parents set
    c. Rewards that parents give
    d. All of the above

42. Before you took these classes, did you know the principles that help us understand behavior?
    a. Yes
    b. No

43. Rules are important, because children must know what is expected of them.
    a. True
    b. False

44. Which of the following terms means treating behavior in the same way each time it happens?
    a. time-out
    b. grounding
    c. obeying
    d. consistency

45. Before you took these classes, did you know how to set rules for your children?
    a. Yes
    b. No

46. Johnny just cleaned his room. Right after he cleaned his room, he got to go to the candy store. Did Johnny's behavior get;
    a. rewarded
    b. punished
    c. ignored
    d. time-out

47. Johnny cleaned his room every week for the next month. His parents did not notice. Johnny will probably keep cleaning his room.
    a. True
    b. False

48. Before you took these classes, did you know how to plan a program to change your child's behavior?
    a. Yes
    b. No

49. Which one of the following ways of reacting to a child's behavior can be damaging to the child?
    a. grounding
    b. time-out
    c. ignoring
    d. insults/putdowns

50. Ignoring, time-out, and grounding are all forms of discipline.
    a. True
    b. False

51. Before you took these classes, did you understand the different types of discipline?
    a. Yes

Post-test - Answer Key

Module 1

1	a
2	c
3	b
4	a
5	d
6	b
7	a
8	b
9	b
10	a
11	b
12	b

Module 2

13	b
14	a
15	b
16	b
17	b
18	b
19	b
20	c
21	b
22	a
23	b
24	b

Module 3

25	a
26	a
27	b
28	b
29	c
30	b
31	a
32	c
33	b
34	a
35	d
36	b

Module 4

37	b
38	b
39	b
40	b
41	d
42	b
43	a
44	d
45	b
46	a
47	b
48	b
49	d
50	a
51	b

Status Change

The monitoring model suggests that the knowledge parents obtain and their satisfaction with service converge to increase parenting skills. Increased skills should then result in a change in status. Status change is the link between the service and the mandates of the Department. As a public child welfare agency the Department is to assure permanent, safe homes for children who enter the system. Positive status changes are children being returned home and cases being closed. The link between increased skills and positive status change cannot be assumed to be automatic. Perhaps the best way to monitor these changes is through the movement table.

The movement table tracks DCFS cases receiving parent training. As a monitoring tool the table is constructed each month for each site. Comparisons can then be made across sites and over periods of time including monitoring the parents who received service after the service has been completed. Ideally, field office comparisons between those receiving parent training and all other open cases would be made.

The example movement table on the next page demonstrates the concept. In this example, two families who were receiving the parent education service became DCFS open cases and therefore are shown in cell a. Three family cases were closed with the family intact (c). Eight families were intact at both the beginning and end of the month (d). One family had a child placed during the month (e). Seven families had at least one child in placement at both the beginning and the end of the month (h). One family was reunited (g). Consequently, at the end of this month, there are 11 intact families receiving service and 8 families in which there is at least one child in placement. There were 4 positive movements during the month (3 case closings and one family reunited) and 3 negative (2 case openings and 1 placement).

Example

Movement Table

One part of the Parent Education Monitoring System uses the movement table as a measure of status change. For this service, the relevant statuses involve case openings/closings, families which are intact, and families in which a child is in placement.

MOVEMENT		TO	
	Termination	Intact Family	Child in Placement
FROM Intake		2[a]	0[b]
Intact Family	3[c]	8[d]	1[e]
Child in Placement	0[f]	1[g]	7[h]
Total DCFS open cases at end of month		11	8

Data needed to complete table:

At beginning of program:

a. number of intact families
b. number of families with at least one child in placement.

At end of month:

a. number of new DCFS open cases with family intact
b. number of new DCFS open cases with a child in placement
c. number of cases closed with no children in placement
d. number of intact families at both the beginning and end of month
e. number of open family cases with child placed during month
f. number of cases closed with child in placement.
g. number of open family cases with all children returned from placement
h. number of open family cases with a child in placement at both the beginning and end of month

The contract monitor is the person who completes the movement table each month. To maintain the movement table the monitor needs a list of all parents receiving service from each parent education provider. A check with the local Department field office will yield information on which of these are DCFS open cases and which families have children in placement. Change in status each month can be obtained by checking the report "analysis of client movement" generated the first week of each month by the Department information system. This report lists movement each month by case name and is sent to each region. Monitors must remember to check for those self-referrals which were not open DCFS cases and which are opened during any given month. Monitors who wish can use the movement table several months after the completion of service to assess effectiveness over time.

This monitoring task was found to consume a lot of the contract monitor's time and efforts. This is a task which could be automated. The Department's information system appears to have the design and structural features necessary to accomodate this task. Consequently, it is suggested that the Department's management information system be enhanced to provide these reports.

The Monitoring Report

The parent education monitoring report:

- contains only the information necessary to link clients served to outcomes;
- contains standards against which performance is measured;
- includes provisions for decision rules which link information to performance changes in the system.

The amount of data which can be collected for each parent and each site is extensive. This data could then be displayed in a variety of formats. The result might be a mass of data from which it would be difficult to extract information relevant to performance of parents and service providers. The monitoring report was designed to select and present only that data which indicates program performance and is based on the model presented earlier in Figure 1.

Each section of the report provides for a standard against which performance is measured. Without a standard it is not possible to determine adequate, superior or substandard performance. What does it mean, for example, that a parent received a 60 on a post-test? If 30 is average, this is very good. If 90 is average, it is not. The standards might be averages based on previous performance or they might be percentages or percentiles. Whatever is chosen as a standard should be chosen collaboratively. Service providers, Department contract monitors and other relevant persons need to be involved in setting the standard so that it becomes a target which everyone is attempting to meet. The standard is then used to identify decision rules for intervention for service improvement.

Data only become information when they direct behavior. This is the function of the decision rule. Decision rules are if-then statements which link performance, standards and corrective actions. For example, if a service

provider has a dropout rate of twenty percent or more, then the dropouts will be interviewed to determine what the provider could do to better meet these needs. This information could then be used to change the performance of the provider.

It may appear that the number of possible decision rules is very large. However, realistically, the number of feasible and acceptable decision rules in any one area is fairly small. This report does not list the possible decision rules because it is important to establish the rules collaboratively and prior to initiation of service. When established in this manner, it becomes clear what action will be taken if performance is below standard. This action will also be accepted if set collaboratively.

Productivity

The first section of the report contains information on the productivity of the service. This includes three pieces of information:

- the total number of parents served (completing) the service;
- the number of DCFS parents served;
- the number of dropouts.

Parents who are not receiving the information they need tend to stop attending parenting sessions. Consequently the dropout rate is one indication of a service provider's ability to meet parents' needs. In addition, since the target population for service is DCFS cases, the majority of parents served should be DCFS parents. The experience of the last year suggests standards of approximately 10 to 20 percent dropouts and 75 to 85 percent DCFS parents served. Two examples of decision rules in this area might be: If the percent of DCFS parents served is less than 70 percent, then a meeting will be held with DCFS field office caseworkers to explain the service and discuss possible problems. If the percent of dropouts is more than 25 percent, the

Parent Education Monitoring Report

Parent Education Site:

Productivity

Total number of parents served _____

Number of DCFS parents served _____

Number of dropouts _____

Productivity standards _____

Parent Satisfaction Measure	Parenting Knowledge Measure
6	10
5	9
4	8
3	7
2	6
1	5
	4
	3
	2
	1

Average Score	_____	Average Score	_____
Number of Scores	_____	Number of Scores	_____
Satisfaction Standard	_____	Knowledge Standard	_____

Decision Rules:

Parenting Education Site _____

Parenting Skills Score

10

9

8

7

6

5

4

3

2

1

0

Average score _____

Number of scores _____

Parenting Skills Standard _____

Status Change

Number of children in placement at beginning of service _____

Number of positive movements _____

Number of negative movements _____

Movement Standard _____

_____

Decision Rules

contract monitor will meet with Department caseworkers and educators to discuss parent assessment and referral.

Parent Satisfaction Measure

The parent satisfaction measure is the score on the 16-item scale developed for the parent education program. Initially 100 items were written reflecting areas such as empathy, acceptance, and gaining control. Through three periods of testing and statistical scale analysis, the 100 items were reduced to the current 16. Each item is scored on a four-point scale so that the possible range is from 16 to 64. On the monitoring report the scores are reported via an innovative frequency distribution. In this format, the first digit of the score is presented in a column on the left. The second digit is then placed to the right. For example, if there were four scores--64, 61, 58, 60--they would appear:

6 | 0, 1, 4
5 | 8

This format preserves data for further analysis as well as graphically depicts the distribution of scores. The average score is computed and the number of scores is recorded. Current experience would suggest an average satisfaction score of about 50 out of the possible 64. In addition, educators might receive valuable insight by examining the parent's response to each of the 16 items. The scale could also be used to obtain the perspective of program dropouts. The scale could be completed by dropouts via mail or telephone and these results provided to the parent educator. An example of a decision rule in the area is: if the average parent satisfaction score is less than 45, then the scale items will be examined and areas for corrective action provided the parent educator.

Parenting Knowledge Measure

The parenting knowledge measure is a score which combines the parenting knowledge a parent has at the completion of service with the knowledge gained through the service. This measure is based on a post-test which contains two content questions for each curriculum objective. There are 34 such questions.

The knowledge gained component is assessed through a retrospective mechanism. After the two content questions on a given objective, the parent is asked if they knew this content prior to participation in the service. As noted earlier, this technique has been shown to avoid the problems of contamination caused by a pre-test, as well as being as effective as the pre-test/post-test approach. This technique was positively received by parents during the testing period. There was a range in the responses, indicating parents seriously considered what knowledge they had prior to class participation.

In scoring, a parent only receives credit for gaining knowledge in a content area if they answer "no" to the retrospective question as well as answering both content questions correctly. The parenting knowledge score is computed by the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Number of content questions correct} + 2 \times (\text{Number of retrospective questions answered no})}{68}$$

This produces a scale from 0 to 100. A person who answers all questions correctly and answers "no" to all of the retrospective questions obtains a score of 100. A person who answers all questions correctly and answers "yes" to all of the retrospective questions receives a score of 50. A person who answers all content questions incorrectly receives a zero. The experience of the last year would suggest a parenting knowledge gained standard of an average score of approximately 60. One example of a decision rule in this area is: If the parenting knowledge average score is less than 60, then the

educator will examine unsuccessful content areas and change the teaching approach, materials, or exercises.

Parenting Skills Measure

The parenting skills score moves the parenting assessment beyond knowledge to behavior. This score is based on assessment of the parent education agreement by the parent, educator and caseworker. At the beginning of service there was an assessment determining which of the 12 skills were to be the focus of service. Those skills agreed to by parents, educators, and caseworkers were the focus of service. At the conclusion of service another assessment is completed. During this assessment the parent, educator and caseworker each provides their perspective as to whether the skill was learned. By and large the parent and educator complete their assessment together with the caseworker completing theirs separately.

The parenting skills score is computed by the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Number of skills learned as assessed by: parent and educator + caseworker}}{2 \times (\text{number of agreed on skills at service initiation})}$$

The result is again a scale from 0 to 100. Experience of this last year would suggest a parenting skill standard of an average score of 50-60. An example of a decision rule in this area is: If the average parenting skills score is 10 less than the knowledge score, educators and caseworkers are to be provided parenting skills assessment training. The field test experience indicated wide variation in assessment by both parents and caseworkers. Some complete the assessment very carefully and others do not. This suggests an area for development and training.

Status Change

Status change is the final link between client service and agency outcomes. The "bottom line" for a public child welfare agency is the provision of services which enable parents to function adequately so that

children can be returned home and agency cases can be closed. Status change involves three pieces of information from the movement table:

- the number of children in placement at the beginning of service;
- the number of positive movements (children returned home or cases closed);
- the number of negative movements (children placed or cases opened).

In field testing, contract monitors had great difficulty completing the movement tables because of lack of information system support. Current improvements in the Department's information system when tailored to producing movement tables by field office and contracted service will greatly assist contract monitors in this area and will facilitate the setting of movement standards.

Decision rules in this area would focus on the placement, case opening/closing decision making process. Consequently an example of a decision rule might be: If a field office experiences no movement, the caseworker for each parent will be asked: When will this case be closed? What is required to close this case? What do these parents need to have these child(ren) returned? Asking these questions has been effective in various permanent planning projects.

The monitoring system when implemented links changes in parenting knowledge, to changes in parenting skills, to changes in status. Through this system, service effectiveness is assessed and the critical link to Department decision making is assured. The monitoring system requires a commitment on the part of the Department to go beyond monitoring dollars and numbers of clients served to working with both contractors and caseworkers for service and client improvement.

Results of the Monitoring System Pilot Test

The past year of the Parent Training Initiative has been devoted to improved service design along with development and pilot testing of the monitoring system. These service design and development activities began relatively late and involved considerable effort so that implementation of the redesigned service and pilot testing of the monitoring system was undertaken for only the last group of classes conducted in FY82. Improved elements of service design and pilot testing of the monitoring system have shown positive results.

This section of the report will discuss findings from testing the elements of improved service design as well as the monitoring system. In addition, the monitoring report for each site will be presented and discussed. This testing period has also identified areas for further development which will be briefly detailed in the final section of this report.

Refinements in Service Design

The major elements of service design implemented during this period included:

- selection of a target population;
- development of a specific operational curriculum;
- reduction of the number of class sessions.

These were significant improvements which were reflected in reduced dropout rates and in sites delivering the same curriculum. The dropout rate for the first fiscal year was 53 percent. After implementation of these design features the dropout rate for the testing period was only 23 percent.

Curriculum revision produced a program in which content and activities are specified for each of eight sessions and can easily be followed. Several of the sites using the curriculum this year had been involved in providing parent education for some 18 months. These educators helped develop the curriculum

and were encouraged to add to the activities and content, to provide feedback on the success and failure of the content and activities, and to stay as close as possible to the ordering and outline of the program. Informal feedback and interviews with educators indicated that most sites found the content and activities useful and closely followed the objectives and ordering of the programs. One site did rearrange the modules and added substantially to the content. Results of the parenting knowledge portion of the post-test confirmed that most parents exited from the program with the cognitive knowledge presented through the program.

The retrospective feature of the post-test provided a unique mechanism for closer examination of the curriculum. As previously described, the retrospective mechanism is simply a question for each curriculum objective which asks parents if they knew the concept before taking the parent education classes. Parents simply respond "yes" or "no." Some may question the validity of parents' perceptions and, in individual cases, this may be justified. However, taken as a group, by site and across sites, patterns are apparent and much can be learned about both the curriculum and the educators. Clearly a response by 10 percent of all parents saying they knew a concept before attending classes is different from 90 percent reporting they knew a concept beforehand. One can have more confidence in the knowledge gained by the former group than by the latter.

Variation in these percentages between sites is an indication of the educator's abilities or limits to translate the curriculum into knowledge useful to parents. If the percentage of parents not previously knowing a concept is 80 in one site and 20 in another, it is more likely to be the educator than the curriculum accounting for the difference. On the other hand, variation across objectives for all parents served is more likely to be an indication of strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum.

Table 1 on the following page reports the results of examination of the retrospective mechanism for all parents served in the last set of classes in FY82. The table lists, by objective, the number of parents responding "no" to the retrospective question, the percent of all parents this represents, and the range of percentages across sites by indicating the highest and lowest site percentages.

Across objectives, the overall percentages range from 17 to 77. Certainly the curriculum related to the third objective in Module II (17%) needs revision since most parents already knew the concepts, while the fourth objective in Module IV (77%) is meeting the needs of a majority of parents. In addition to this variance between objectives, for any one objective the range between sites can be quite large. For example, in Module I, the third objective had a range between sites of 41 with a high of 88. On the other hand, the first objective has a range of 30 with a high of 38 percent. There is a need for a standard which would indicate the objectives for which there should either be curriculum revision or some other type of intervention.

Initially a standard of 50 percent appears to be appropriate. If an objective does not obtain 50 percent for any site, it is a prime candidate for revision. This produces three candidates: Module I, objective 1; Module II, objectives 2 and 3. A second standard might be obtaining the 50 percent as an average for all parents. When this standard is applied, six additional objectives are identified. For these six, at least one site obtained a 50 percent, while the overall average was less. Perhaps for these objectives, the sites which obtained 50 percent should share their approach and experiences before curriculum revision is attempted.

In summary, it can be said that significant progress was made with this year's curriculum revision. As is true of any curriculum, there is a constant need for revision as well as training of educators. The retrospective feature

Table 1

Number and Percent of Parents Responding No to Retrospective Question[a]

			Range		
Module I	N	%	H	L	
1	26	28	38	8	**
2	51	54	81	24	
3	61	65	88	47	
4	58	62	88	47	
Module II					
1	26	28	50	13	*
2	18	19	38	6	**
3	16	17	25	0	**
4	30	32	50	8	*
Module III					
1	29	31	50	24	*
2	31	33	50	13	*
3	53	56	75	35	
4	37	39	56	29	*
Module IV					
1	58	62	81	35	
2	64	68	83	53	
3	39	41	71	12	*
4	72	77	94	47	
5	63	67	75	47	

Based on 98 total post-tests.

[a]Retrospective questions were of the form "Before you took these classes did you know_____?" See next page for curriculum modules and objectives.

* Those objectives which did not obtain 50 percent across sites.

** Those objectives which did not obtain 50 percent for any site.

Module I -- Communication

1. State three non-verbal communication cues (i.e., eye contact, body language, posture).

2. Demonstrate at least two attentive listening behaviors (such as turning to the child, stopping other activities, being physically at the child's level).

3. State the feeling message from at least two of the examples given on the handout, "Recognizing Feelings."

4. Give two examples of an "I" message, and two examples of a "You" message.

Module II -- Self Esteem

1. List three positive characteristics about themselves, three positive characteristics about their child, and three positive characteristics about others.

2. Give three verbal and three non-verbal positive messages about self and child or children. Receive three positive statements about self and child or children.

3. List two experiences and two relationships that enhance or could enhance their own self esteem.

4. Plan an activity with a child that enhances the self esteem of both participants.

Module III -- Managing Angry Feelings

1. Describe two situations where personal emotions have triggered over-reactions.

2. List four stressors that one can change and four that one cannot.

3. Identify three harmful consequences of anger.
Identify three methods of expressing anger in constructive ways.

4. Demonstrate four appropriate responses to stress, i.e. problem solving, relaxation, etc.

Module IV -- Behavior Management

1. Describe the kind of parenting model they most often use with their children.

2. Explain at least two principles of behavior and illustrate each principle with an example from their family.

3. Explain at least three principles related to setting rules.

4. Plan a behavior change program utilizing selection of a behavior, recording, rewarding and evaluating results.

5. List three kinds of punishments.

of the post-test provides important feedback identifying points of intervention for both training of educators and revision of curriculum.

East St. Louis Region Monitoring Results

A summary of the pilot test of the monitoring system for the sites within the East St. Louis Region is shown in Figure II. It can be seen that the Mental Health Center of Southern Madison County provided excellent services. They served 25 parents, 76 percent of whom were DCFS clients, and had no program dropouts. Both the Human Service Center of Randolph County and Children's Home and Aid Society (CHAIS) experienced a high dropout rate. In addition, the Human Service Center did not serve any DCFS clients. The average satisfaction score must be examined in light of the number of program dropouts. While CHAIS had the highest average satisfaction score, they also had a very large number of dropouts. In addition, the individual monitoring report for CHAIS shows the satisfaction scale for only 12 parents. This was due to their use of an old form of the scale for 5 parents who then could not be aggregated with the rest of the class. Therefore, the high CHAIS satisfaction score is the result of a select sample of parents, with those most dissatisfied leaving the program.

The Human Service Center obtained the highest average knowledge score with CHAIS being the lowest. This is not surprising given that the Human Service Center did not serve DCFS clients and could therefore recruit and/or retain higher functioning parents. The average score of 62 obtained by the Mental Health Center might be taken as a standard.

As indicated by Figure II, parent satisfaction and knowledge converge in the skills measure which is the behavioral component of the assessment. The Mental Health Center had the highest average parenting skills score. The fact that the other sites had lower skills scores although they may have had

Figure II

East St. Louis Parent Education Sites
Monitoring Results

Childrens Home and Aid Society

Parents Served	19
DCFS Clients	17
Dropouts	10

Satisfaction 81 — Knowledge 50

Skills

38

Movement

+ 2

- 0

Human Service Center of
Randolph County

Parents Served	11
DCFS Clients	0
Dropouts	10

Satisfaction 76 — Knowledge 71

Skills

44

Movement

+ 0

- 0

Mental Health Center of Southern
Madison County

Parents Served	25
DCFS Clients	19
Dropouts	0

Satisfaction 73 — Knowledge 62

Skills

78

Movement

+ 2

- 0

higher satisfaction and knowledge scores reinforces the need to view the assessments as multiple indicators of program performance.

The movement area, which is critical to linking public child welfare services to mandates, did not show substantial impact. The Human Service Center could not demonstrate positive movement since they were not serving DCFS clients. However, the other two sites obtained the same meager positive movements. This indicates a critical point of intervention for further provision of the parenting service. The service is designed sufficiently that sites can service DCFS clients, maintain them in the program, and provide them important parenting knowledge and skills. (The results from the Mental Health Center substantiate this.) The point of intervention for linking successful service to movement is the DCFS caseworker. Thus, there is a need to work with caseworkers. It may be a need to improve their assessment skills so that parents referred are those who have the greatest chance of yielding positive movements. Or, it may be a need for training in determining the conditions which must be met in order to reunite families or close cases.

An additional point related to movement is the continued tracking for a period of time after the completion of service. This service is only eight weeks in duration which may be too short a time period to accurately identify either positive or negative movements. In addition, movements related to the service are more likely to occur in a time period after service is completed. The difficulty in this area is the lack of Department information support. It is difficult and time-consuming for contract monitors to keep track of client movement. If the Department management information system were developed to provide this data, continued monitoring of movement would be facilitated. The newest revision of the information system could easily support such a tracking function.

The individual monitoring reports for each of the sites within the East St. Louis region appear on the following pages. The standards for each part of the report are not present since they were not developed prior to initiation of this service. Also, decision rules are not included for the same reason. It is clear from these monitoring reports that points of intervention are indicated. For example, if CHAIS were to provide service to another group of parents, a high dropout rate would indicate that CHAIS staff should be trained in assessment or that interviews of past program dropouts should be conducted to determine what the educators might do differently to maintain parents in the program.

Parent Education Monitoring Report

Parenting Education Site Mental Health Center of Southern Madison County

Productivity

Total Number of Parents Served	25
Number of DCFS Parents Served	19
Number of Dropouts	0

Standard for DCFS Parents Served and/or dropouts.

Parent Satisfaction Measure *

9	4
8	1, 3, 4, 4, 4, 5, 7
7	0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 6, 8, 8
6	2, 3
5	4, 6, 9
4	0
3	
2	
1	

Average score 73

Number of scores 24

Parent Satisfaction Standard _____

Parenting Knowledge Measure

10	
9	
8	1, 1, 5
7	1, 1, 2, 2, 2, 4, 8
6	3, 3, 6, 8
5	0, 1, 3, 3, 6, 6
4	7, 7
3	8
2	9
1	

Average score 62

Number of scores 24

Parenting Knowledge Standard _____

Decision Rules

*Based on the 32 item scale with a possible score of 96

Parenting Education Site Mental Health Center of Southern Madison County

Parenting Skills Score

10	0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0
9	
8	0, 8
7	1, 5
6	3
5	0, 0, 0, 0, 6
4	1, 4
3	
2	
1	
0	

Average score 78

Number of scores 22

Parenting Skills Standard _____

Status Change

Number of children in placement at beginning of service 7

Number of positive movements 2

Number of negative movements 0

Movement Standard _____

Decision Rules

Parent Education Monitoring Report

Parenting Education Site Childrens Home and Aid Society, East St. Louis

Productivity

Total Number of Parents Served 19

Number of DCFS Parents Served 17

Number of Dropouts 10

Standard for DCFS Parents Served and/or dropouts.

Parent Satisfaction Measure

9	2, 3
8	3, 4, 4, 5, 8, 8
7	3, 4
6	0, 7
5	
4	
3	
2	
1	

Average score 81

Number of scores 12

Parent Satisfaction Standard _____

Parenting Knowledge Measure

10	
9	
8	7
7	1
6	2, 2, 3, 6
5	0, 4, 6
4	3, 3, 4, 6
3	8
2	2, 4, 5
1	

Average score 50

Number of scores 17

Parenting Knowledge Standard _____

Decision Rules

Parenting Education Site Childrens Home and Aid Society

Parenting Skills Score

10	
9	
8	
7	0, 9
6	0, 2, 3
5	0, 0, 8
4	0
3	8
2	0, 5, 5, 9
1	3, 3, 7
0	6, 8

Average score 38

Number of scores 19

Parenting Skills Standard _____

Status Change

Number of children in placement at beginning of service 18

Number of positive movements 2

Number of negative movements 0

Movement Standard _____

Decision Rules

Parent Education Monitoring Report

Parenting Education Site: Human Service Center of Randolph County

Productivity

Total Number of Parents Served	11
Number of DCFS Parents Served	0
Number of Dropouts	10

Standard for DCFS Parents Served and/or dropouts.

Parent Satisfaction Measure

9	
8	2, 4, 6, 7, 8
7	4, 5, 7, 8, 8, 8
6	5
5	9
4	7
3	
2	
1	

Average score: 76

Number of scores: 14

Parent Satisfaction Standard: _____

Parenting Knowledge Measure

10	
9	0
8	5
7	1, 2, 4, 4, 8, 9
6	8
5	0, 1, 9
4	
3	
2	
1	

Average score: 71

Number of scores: 12

Parenting Knowledge Standard: _____

Decision Rules

Post-test - Answer Key

Module 1		Module 2		Module 3		Module 4	
1	a	13	b	25	a	37	b
2	c	14	a	26	a	38	b
3	b	15	b	27	b	39	b
4	a	16	b	28	b	40	b
5	d	17	b	29	c	41	d
6	b	18	b	30	b	42	b
7	a	19	b	31	a	43	a
8	b	20	c	32	c	44	d
9	b	21	b	33	b	45	b
10	a	22	a	34	a	46	a
11	b	23	b	35	d	47	b
12	b	24	b	36	b	48	b
						49	d
						50	a
						51	b

Parenting Education Site Human Service Center of Randolph County

Parenting Skills Score

10	
9	
8	
7	
6	
5	0, 0
4	1, 1, 5, 5, 5, 5, 6
3	6, 8
2	
1	
0	

Average score 44

Number of scores 11

Parenting Skills Standard _____

Status Change

Number of children in placement at beginning of service 0

Number of positive movements 0

Number of negative movements 0

Movement Standard _____

Decision Rules

Rockford Region Monitoring Results

DeKalb 4-C was the most productive site in the Rockford region as indicated by Figure III. Thirty-one parents were served with 19 of these being DCFS clients. Lutheran Social Services served very few parents during this period. There was some confusion with this site as to the number to be served during this testing period and the number served prior to this wave. Children's Development Center fell between these productivity extremes but experienced the highest number of dropouts. The seven dropouts represent nearly a 30 percent dropout rate which may indicate a point for intervention.

Client satisfaction average scores were acceptable for all sites as were knowledge gained averages. Examination of the individual monitoring report for the DeKalb site indicates relatively few parents completed the satisfaction scale and post-test. Again there was some confusion with the instruments arriving at the site after the completion of one class. However, this class was previously self-referrals so that the data obtained from DeKalb represent DCFS clients.

Average skills scores were quite good for all sites with Children's Development Center doing very well in this regard. For DeKalb there is considerable missing data for the parenting skills measure. This is due to a problem with the field office and obtaining caseworker cooperation. This indicates an important point for intervention.

Movement for all three sites was nearly nonexistent. As was indicated for the East St. Louis sites, there is a need to intervene with the relevant DCFS field offices so that service is related to movement. Two caseworkers in the Rockford region did indicate that they would return children as a result of this service. This movement is not

Figure III.

Rockford Region Parent Education Sites
Monitoring Results

Children's Development Center

Parents Served	17
DCFS Clients	14
Dropouts	7

Satisfaction 72 — Knowledge 63

Skills 74

Movement
+0
-1

DeKalb County 4-C

Parents Served	31
DCFS Clients	19
Dropouts	4

Satisfaction 72 — Knowledge 66

Skills 66

Movement
+1
-0

Lutheran Social Services

Parents Served	7
DCFS Clients	6
Dropouts	2

Satisfaction 79 — Knowledge 66

Skills 67

Movement
+0
-0

captured because of the short time frames previously discussed. To adequately capture movement which might be related to service, movement monitoring needs to continue for a few months after the conclusion of services.

Parenting Education Site	DeKalb County 4-C
Total Number of Parents Served	31
Number of DCFS Parents Served	19
Number of Dropouts	4

Parent Satisfaction Measure		Parenting Knowledge Measure	
9		9	1
8	0, 8	8	2, 4
7	1, 1, 4, 4, 6, 8, 9, 9, 9	7	1, 1, 4, 6, 9, 9
6	1, 3, 3	6	3, 3
5		5	0, 4, 6
4	8	4	3, 4, 9
3		3	
2		2	
1		1	

Average Score	72	Average Score	66
Number of scores	15	Number of Scores	17

Parenting Education Site DeKalb County 4-C

Parenting Skills Score

10

9

8 0, 0, 8

7

6 0

5 0

4 0

3

2

1

0

Average Score 66

Number of Scores 6

Number of Children in Placement of Beginning of Service 5

Number of Positive Movements 1

Number of Negative Movements 0

Parenting Education Site Children's Development Center - Rockford

Total Number of Parents Served	17
Number of DCFS Parents Served	14
Number of Dropouts	7

Parent Satisfaction Measure	Parenting Knowledge Measure
	10 0, 0
9	9
8 1, 3, 4, 8	8 3, 5
7 0, 2, 5, 7, 7, 8, 9	7 4, 9
6 3, 3, 4, 8	6 3, 5, 5, 6
5 1, 5	5 1
4	4 1, 4, 7
3	3 7, 8, 8
2	2
1	1

Average score	72	Average score	63
Number of scores	17	Number of scores	17

Decision Rules

Parenting Education Site Children's Development Center - Rockford

Parenting Skills Score

10 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0

9

8 3

7 2

6 0, 7

5 0, 0

4

3 3

2 5

1

Average score 74

Number of scores 14

Number of children in placement at beginning of service 6

Number of positive movements 0

Number of negative movements 1

Decision Rules

Parenting Education Site Lutheran Social Services

Total Number of Parents Served	7
Number of DCFS Parents Served	6
Number of Dropouts	1

Parent Satisfaction Measure	Parenting Knowledge Measure
9	9 0
8 2, 5, 9	8 2
7 6, 4, 7, 9	7 2, 4
6 9	6 2
5	5 3, 7
4	4
3	3 7
2	2
1	1
Average score 79	Average score 66
Number of scores 8	Number of scores 8

Decision Rules

Parenting Education Site Lutheran Social Service

Parenting Skills Score

10

9

8 8

7 1, 5

6

5 0, 0

4

3

2

1

Average score 67

Number of scores 5

Number of children in placement at beginning of service 1

Number of positive movements 0

Number of negative movements 0

Decision Rules

Suggested Future Developments

The experience with service redesign and pilot testing of the monitoring system indicates three primary areas for continued development:

1. The monitoring system should be implemented.
2. The Department information system should be developed to provide support for the movement area of the monitoring system.
3. The curriculum should undergo continued refinement and revision.

Implementation

The monitoring system has shown itself to be an effective way of measuring adequate or inadequate performance and identifying points of intervention for further service refinements. Implementation of this system has several implications. Monitoring report standards and decision rules need to be developed. This report has suggested possible standards and decision rules. However, the important point is that these be developed collaboratively between the Department and the service provider. In this way, they become standards which are real targets and behaviors which are more likely to be performed.

Another consequence of implementation of the monitoring system is the Department devoting resources to the system and to interventions when they are indicated. The system developed is economical and the intervention would be beneficial from the Department's point of view, but the interventions require a resource commitment. Those points of intervention indicated through the monitoring report normally require additional training. Training requires both expertise and source commitment.

Information System Support

The second area of development is related to the monitoring system. The movement of children and the closing of cases should be the consequences of any public child welfare service. Monitoring this aspect would be greatly enhanced if the Department's management information system supported this function. The development within the Department of the MARS/CYSIS system is a significant move in this direction. It should take only minor programming of reports to complete this critical link. Pilot testing of the system has shown that monitors cannot be expected to perform this function manually on an ongoing basis. Automated support is essential.

Curriculum Refinement

As is true of all educational services, curriculum is continuously in need of revision. This last year the curriculum has become targeted and specific. This was accomplished through a consensus of those providing the service. The retrospective feature of the post test provides important feedback from parents. As discussed earlier, the feedback obtained in the pilot test indicates several areas within the curriculum which should be revised or eliminated. Thus a starting point for what should properly be an ongoing process of service design and refinement has been identified.